

**Date:** 2023-09-25

**Subject:** **Recommendation Report: City-Initiated Zoning By-law Amendment to Permit University, College and Accessory Uses in Downtown Brampton**

**Contact:** Tristan Costa, Policy Planner, Integrated City Planning  
Shannon Brooks-Gupta, Manager  
Official Plan & Growth Management, Integrated City Planning

**Report Number:** Planning, Bld & Growth Mgt-2023-667

**Recommendations:**

1. That the report from Tristian Costa, Policy Planner, Integrated City Planning to the Planning and Development Meeting of September 25, 2023, re: **Recommendation Report – City Initiated Zoning Bylaw Amendment to Permit University, College and Accessory Uses in Downtown Brampton**, be received; and,
2. That the proposed City-initiated Zoning By-law Amendment attached hereto as Attachment 1 be adopted to amend the Comprehensive Zoning By-law 270-2004.

**Overview:**

- **This report recommends approval of a City-initiated Zoning By-law amendment to permit University and College uses, and related accessory uses, on multiple properties in Downtown Brampton.**
- **The properties are designated “Central Area” in the Official Plan, and “Central Area Mixed-Use” and “Institutional” in the Downtown Brampton Secondary Plan (Area 7).**
- **A statutory public meeting for the Zoning By-law Amendment was held on July 11, 2018, receiving a number of delegations from the public and correspondence generally in support of this amendment.**
- **Recent opportunities to attract new or expand existing post-secondary institutions in the Downtown has highlighted the importance of finalizing this Zoning By-law Amendment, helping to attract new businesses and**

**bring top talent through post-secondary institutions strategically located within Brampton's Innovation District.**

- **Algoma University's growth and Toronto Metropolitan University's (TMU) presence have provided a significant foundation for downtown's revitalization and have been welcomed by downtown Brampton businesses and landlords.**
- **Algoma's growth continues to surge in downtown Brampton as they urgently require an additional 300,000 sq. ft. for teaching and other operational and support services, preferably in proximity to higher order transit and their current campus, as described in their presentation to Council in January 2023 (see Attachment 10).**
- **The landlord of 45 Railroad Street is currently working with Algoma to potentially lease space but expanded university permissions are needed in order to facilitate the use.**
- **The amendment to the Zoning By-law supports the directions of the 2040 Vision and Draft Brampton Plan, aligning with the vision for the Downtown Urban Centre.**

### **Background:**

In 2017, the City of Brampton undertook an intensive community-wide engagement as part of developing a comprehensive document to guide Brampton's future as a connected, inclusive and innovative city. The resulting "2040 Vision: Living the Mosaic" identifies a bold, aspirational vision for the future of Brampton, including realizing downtown Brampton as an Urban Centre and education, life sciences and arts location.

Following endorsement of the 2040 Vision, the City has supported developing interest in the downtown to reinforce its identity as an Innovation District. The Innovation District capitalizes on its proximity to transit (the Kitchener GO Innovation Corridor) and on multiple partnerships to support an ecosystem of institutions, educational facilities and businesses. Key partnerships include Algoma University, Toronto Metropolitan University (Rogers Cybersecure Catalyst, Brampton Venture Zone), with potential to attract other universities and colleges to the Downtown. Algoma and TMU have shown particular interest in the downtown. Algoma is currently looking for an additional 300K sq. ft. of space, preferably in downtown Brampton.

### July 11, 2018 – Information Report and Statutory Public Meeting

Planning staff presented an Information Report titled "City Initiated Zoning By-law Amendment to permit a University and College — Ward 1 and 3" to the Planning and Development Committee at a statutory public meeting on July 11, 2018. The report outlined staff's proposal to amend the Zoning By-law to add university and colleges to

the list of permitted uses on lands designated “Central Area Mixed Use” within historic downtown Brampton. The proposed Zoning By-law Amendment (ZBA) was circulated to City departments and commenting agencies and sent by first class mail to property owners and other landowners within 240 metres of the subject lands. Public notification was also published in the Brampton Guardian.

Staff received six (6) delegations and four (4) written submissions from members of the public related to the proposed ZBA. Members of the public were generally in support of the amendment, with several requests to expand the boundaries to include additional properties, and some concerns expressed regarding traffic congestion and parking impacts. The meeting minutes and correspondence received are included in Attachments 8 and 9 to this report. Staff’s responses to this feedback are outlined in the Current Situation section below.

### **Current Situation:**

The purpose of this staff report is to recommend Council approval to amend the Zoning By-law to permit university and college uses, and related accessory uses, within a defined area of the downtown to support new and future post-secondary institutions. The proposed amendment to the Zoning By-law will provide the necessary next steps in supporting post-secondary expansion in the downtown and complement the City’s Innovation District objectives.

Although time has passed since the Public Meeting, amending the Zoning By-law remains as valid today, and is consistent with the City’s direction to support post-secondary institutional growth in the downtown. Taking into consideration the growing interest in bringing and expanding post-secondary institutions to the Downtown, this amendment will help to promptly streamline the development process for existing and new post-secondary institutions within Brampton’s Innovation District. Opportunities to expand these permissions more generally across Brampton’s strategic growth areas will be explored through the Comprehensive Zoning By-law Review.

### Technical Considerations

The following analysis provides justification of the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment based on the current policy context.

#### *Official Plan and Secondary Plan*

The City-initiated ZBA is seeking to add a university, college, and accessory uses to lands that are primarily located in the historic downtown, and designated “Central Area” in the City’s Official Plan. Lands within this designation are the preferred location for investment and intensification, permitting a full range of office, retail, commercial and service activities, as well as an array of residential and institutional uses.

The lands subject to the proposed ZBA largely correspond to the lands designated “Central Area Mixed-Use” within the Downtown Secondary Plan (Area 7). Lands within the “Central Area Mixed-Use” designation are intended to accommodate mixed-use developments incorporating any combination of commercial, retail, office, residential, hotel, open space, recreational, institutional, and a full range of entertainment and cultural uses.

The proposed amendment also includes lands that are designated “Institutional” in the Official Plan. Lands within this designation are intended to accommodate major institutional uses as well as local-scale institutional uses. The proposed uses within the Draft Zoning By-law Amendment are consistent with the approved permitted uses in the 2006 Brampton Official Plan and Secondary Plan designations.

### *Draft Brampton Plan*

Ongoing work for the new draft Official Plan (*Brampton Plan*) supports the proposal to locate university, colleges and accessory uses in the downtown. A key direction of *Draft Brampton Plan* is to locate and concentrate diverse uses, functions, densities and a higher level of transit connectivity in urban centres, which include locations like downtown Brampton. Post-secondary institutions are one of several major institutional uses permitted within the Mixed-Use Areas designation that support innovation and contribute to the City’s planning and economic development goals.

*Draft Brampton Plan* reflects the establishment and expansion of post-secondary education in Brampton, and specifically within the Downtown Urban Centre, and encourages the expansion of Algoma University and establishment and expansion of Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU) within the City of Brampton through a supportive policy framework.

### Comments from the Public Meeting

Several delegations and correspondence received were in favour of the proposal, including:

- Support from Algoma University regarding the development of post-secondary programming in the downtown core; and
- Support from Toronto Metropolitan University (formerly Ryerson University) regarding city initiatives to build new campuses in the downtown.

Staff received two delegations requesting that additional lands be added to the identified area to permit university/college and accessory uses. Staff recommend broader permissions for university, college and accessory uses be considered through the Comprehensive Zoning By-law Review to meet the growing needs for more post-secondary institutions across Brampton.

Staff also received delegations regarding issues related to parking concerns in a small area within the Downtown boundary. Staff will take guidance from Brampton's forthcoming Parking Plan to identify issues and opportunities to address parking needs within the downtown. Additionally, significant progress has and will continue to be made by the City to support the development of public transit connections in the downtown, including investments in higher order transit (LRT and BRT).

Additional delegations speaking to traffic and congestion were not directly related to the current report and proposed rezoning but do highlight the importance of addressing mobility needs through broader planning work being undertaken through the Integrated Downtown Plan.

### **Corporate Implications:**

#### Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications associated with the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment.

#### Economic Development Implications:

The City's recent economic development successes in the downtown can be attributed to our post-secondary institutions' exceptional growth and strength. The proposed amendment to the Comprehensive Zoning By-law that is the subject of this recommendation report will provide the necessary next steps to enable the sustained growth of Brampton's startup ecosystem, post-secondary offerings, and small businesses.

Supporting our post-secondary institutions will enhance the competitiveness of our City through collaboration with the private sector, universities, governments, and other non-profit organizations.

Algoma University's growth and TMU's presence have provided a significant foundation for downtown's revitalization. The growth in the post-secondary sector in the City is expected to continue to stimulate business and commerce, translating into measurable and sustainable economic growth for years to come.

On January 18, 2023, Algoma presented to Council noting their short-term growth projections require an additional 300,000 sq. ft., for operational and student services, with much of it targeted towards the downtown (see Attachment 10). The same presentation noted their extensive economic impact as a result of Brampton's initial investment with the institution. Permitting universities and colleges "as-of-right" will allow Algoma and other universities to move more quickly with expansion opportunities in the downtown.

### Other Implications:

There are no other implications associated with the recommendations of this report.

### **Strategic Focus Area:**

This report and associated recommendations support the Strategic Focus Area “Growing Urban Centres & Neighbourhoods” by stimulating innovation, job creation and growing investment in Strategic Growth Areas, as well as creating strong and connected communities.

### Living the Mosaic – 2040 Vision

This report directly aligns with the vision for Brampton to be a mosaic of complete neighbourhoods and vibrant centres. This report has been prepared in full consideration of the overall vision that the people of Brampton will “Live the Mosaic.”

### **Conclusion:**

The purpose of this Recommendation Report is to permit university/college uses in the downtown to support the expansion of existing and location of future post-secondary institutions. This new permitted use in the downtown Urban Centre will help the city to meet the goals and objectives identified by the 2040 Vision and draft Brampton Plan, while supporting the economic growth and development of Brampton. Further consideration for including these permissions outside of the identified downtown area will be contemplated through the Comprehensive Zoning By-law Review, which will follow the completion of *Brampton Plan*.

Authored by:

Reviewed by:

---

Tristan Costa, MCIP, RPP  
Policy Planner, Integrated City  
Planning

---

Henrik Zbogor, MCIP, RPP  
Director, Integrated City Planning

Submitted by:

Approved by:

---

Steve Ganesh, MCIP, RPP  
Commissioner, Planning, Building &  
Growth Management Department

---

Marlon Kallideen  
Chief Administrative Officer

**Attachments:**

Attachment 1 – Draft Zoning By-law Amendment

Attachment 2 – Location Map

Attachment 3 – Official Plan Designations

Attachment 4 – Secondary Plan Designations

Attachment 5 – Zoning

Attachment 6 – Aerial and Existing Land Use

Attachment 7 – Heritage Resources

Attachment 8 – Meeting Minutes

Attachment 9 – Correspondence Received

Attachment 10 – Algoma University Presentation, January 18, 2023